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NOTE

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2546th MEETING

Held in New York on Friday, 1 June 1984, at 10.00 a.m.

President: Sir John THOMSON (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland).

Present: The representatives of the following States: China, Egypt, France, India, Malta, Netherlands, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Peru, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Upper Volta, Zimbabwe.

Provisional agenda (S/Agenda/2546/Rev.1)

1. Adoption of the agenda

2. Letter dated 21 May 1984 from the representatives of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/16574)

The meeting was called to order at 11.05 a.m.

Expression of thanks to the retiring President

1. The PRESIDENT: At the outset of my presidency of the Security Council for the month of June, I wish to express my own thanks and the thanks of the Council as a whole to my predecessor. Ambassador Troyanovsky is the dean of the Council. He has shown us all how to do the job of President. Patience, humour and fairness were the hallmarks of his tenure. I hope to emulate him, but I suggest that my colleagues on the Council might refrain from praising me—at least until I have done so.

2. I am glad to note that recently the Council has shown an increasing sense of corporate responsibility. This is an asset for the whole United Nations. I hope we can work during June to increase our sense of collegiality and to promote effective action to deal with the serious situations before us. I also hope that we can observe English hours.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Letter dated 21 May 1984 from the representatives of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates addressed to the President of the Security Council (S/16574)

3. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with the decisions taken at previous meetings [*2541st to 2543rd and 2545th meetings*], I invite the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Information of Kuwait and the representative of Saudi Arabia to take places at the Council table, and I invite the representatives of Bahrain, Djibouti, Ecuador, the Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, Jordan, Mauritania, Morocco, Oman, Panama, Qatar, Senegal, Somalia, the Sudan, Tunisia, Turkey, the United Arab Emirates and Yemen to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Al-Sabah (Kuwait) and Mr. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia) took places at the Council table; Mr. Al-Khalifa (Bahrain), Mr. Farah Dirir (Djibouti), Mr. Albornoz (Ecuador), Mr. van Well (Federal Republic of Germany), Mr. Kuroda (Japan), Mr. Salah (Jordan), Mr. Ould Hamody (Mauritania), Mr. Mrani Zentar (Morocco), Mr. Ali (Oman) Mr. Kam (Panama), Mr. Al-Thani (Qatar), Mr. Sarré (Senegal), Mr. Adan (Somalia), Mr. Birido (Sudan), Mr. Bouziri (Tunisia), Mr. Gökçe (Turkey), Mr. Al-Qasimi (United Arab Emirates) and Mr. Sallam (Yemen) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council chamber.

4. The PRESIDENT: I should like to inform members of the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Liberia in which she requests to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

At the invitation of the President, Mrs. Jones (Liberia) took the place reserved for her at the side of the Council chamber.

5. The PRESIDENT: Members of the Council have before them the text of a draft resolution submitted by Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates [*S/16594*].

6. I should also like to draw the attention of members of the Council to document S/16595, which contains the text of a letter dated 30 May 1984 from the representative of Democratic Yemen to the Secretary-General.

7. The first speaker is the representative of Liberia. I invite her to take a place at the Council table and to make her statement.

8. Mrs. JONES (Liberia): The delegation of Liberia congratulates you, Sir, upon your assumption of the duties of President of the Council for the month of June. We feel confident that with your renowned wisdom and capable leadership you will indeed help us to achieve a peaceful resolution of the crisis in the Gulf States.

9. My delegation also congratulates your predecessor for his able and distinguished contribution to the peace process in the world during the previous month.

10. The Government and people of Liberia view with deep concern the escalation of hostilities in the Gulf States. Yet it comes as no surprise that the conflict in the region is reaching a state of prolonged military engagement and insecurity.

11. The unequal distribution of natural resources on our planet, especially those resources considered so vital for the development of the economies of the world, upon which our very lives have become so dependent, and which so often seem to be in jeopardy, creates conditions of economic strangulation in an already critical world economic order.

12. Those nations that have been blessed and are indeed fortunate to be the inheritors of the vital forces of life, such as energy, rightly or wrongly jealously guard their hegemony over those resources and the exclusive right to determine their availability, accessibility and distribution to the rest of humanity. Indeed, mankind has always begged for the privilege of obtaining those vital resources upon which life depends. It will suffer the dilemma of deprivation until this age-old struggle to sustain life on earth has been transformed from poverty to an opportunity to free itself from such dependency.

13. All peace-loving nations have become fearful of the extent to which the situation in the Gulf States will escalate. The Organization's cherished principle of good-neighbourliness has been completely abandoned. In addition, disregard for the principle of neutrality in the region gives cause for serious concern regarding the danger and serious jeopardy to which the lifeblood of our economies is being exposed.

14. The quest for energy is an eternal quest of mankind. It is a serious business indeed—so serious and profound that it makes the difference between our being classified as developed or developing nations, super-Powers or third-world nations. The fundamental basis of these nomenclatures is the amount of energy available and accessible to change our economies from subsistence economies to modern and industrialized economies. Unless and until mankind has broken this yoke of dependency on a few finite sources of energy to do its work, it must learn to live and continue to beg for them and fight for them if need be. It would be far better if we could all simultaneously learn the critical need for interdependence for the survival of our economies and our very lives.

15. Notwithstanding the precarious state of affairs in the Gulf States, there appears to be a serious contradiction: while peaceful nations are calling for the cessation of hostilities in the region, the crisis presents an opportunity for peace-making and profit-making. Are we in danger of being told that war and peace should coexist?

16. The Government of Liberia regrets that ships flying Liberian flags have been hit and damaged and that such action has caused the loss of revenue in our economy. It is therefore to be expected that those involved in such attacks will be equally prepared to make reparations for their actions. My Government appeals to them to desist from further attacks on ships flying the Liberian flag.

17. Further, the Government of Liberia joins all peace-loving States in calling for a peaceful settlement of the dispute among the Gulf States. The right of innocent passage, free trade and navigation in the region should be respected by all of them. My Government further calls upon the Council to take appropriate measures to prevent this regional conflict from escalating further and appeals to all Gulf States to respect Council resolutions calling for the cessation of hostilities.

18. It is a world-wide scenario that the areas of conflict and crisis in the world today are among neighbours, indeed very close neighbours. Nevertheless, the whole world has become one vast neighbourhood with the possibility that a regional conflict may engulf even those nations that are not parties to a dispute. My delegation therefore calls upon the Council to create the right conditions for a peaceful and positive settlement of the dispute among the Gulf States.

19. Mr. MI Guojun (China) [*interpretation from Chinese*]: Mr. President, although you have asked us to refrain from doing so, I should like to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. With your rich diplomatic experience and your outstanding qualities, I am confident you will ably guide the work of the Council in the month of June to success.

20. I should also like to take this opportunity to express our thanks to the retiring President, Ambassador Troyanovsky of the Soviet Union, for his smooth handling of the affairs of the Council in May.

21. Of late there has been a sudden change in the situation in the Gulf region, and the war between Iran and Iraq has extended to repeated attacks on oil-tankers and ships in the region, thereby posing a threat to navigation and trade and foreboding the danger of internationalizing the war. The whole international community is deeply concerned about these developments, and so is China. The parties concerned have referred this matter to the Council, hoping that this dispute can be settled through diplomatic channels, which is a desirable move. The Chinese delegation hopes that the Council will make its due contribution in this regard.

22. All the Gulf States are developing countries belonging to the third world. They should live together in peace and amity. We earnestly appeal to all the parties concerned to exercise restraint, not to take actions that would further aggravate and complicate the situation, and to work actively for the settlement of the dispute through peaceful negotiations so as to avoid super-Power interference.

23. We maintain that free passage on the high seas in the Gulf and the right to trade should be respected. The belligerent countries should cease all hostilities in the Gulf, refrain from attacking ships of countries not parties to the war and respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the other littoral countries. The Gulf States should work together to ensure safety of passage and freedom of navigation in the Gulf, which are in conformity with the basic interests of those States.

24. There is no denying the fact that the recent incidents in the Gulf are the extension and development of the war between Iran and Iraq. With regard to this war, since the very day of its outbreak we have been urging both sides to put an end to it as early as possible and reconcile their differences by peaceful means. Both Iran and Iraq are friendly to China. As friends, we wish in all sincerity to appeal to them once again to turn hostility into friendship. As the Chinese saying goes: both would benefit from peace while neither would remain unscathed in fighting. Peace will benefit not only the two countries but also the stability in the Gulf region and the Middle East as a whole, not to mention the world. In short, people throughout the world will be happy if peace is restored to that region.

25. The Council is again seized of matters relating to the war between Iran and Iraq. Consistent with its position in the past, the Chinese delegation again hopes that the Council will take actions conducive to overcoming the crisis in the Gulf region and bringing about the participation of both belligerent parties in the process of peaceful negotiations.

26. Mr. van der STOEL (Netherlands): At the very outset, allow me to say, Sir, how glad we are to see you presiding over this important meeting of the Council on the first day of your mandate. In the course of our membership of the Council, we have worked closely together on many occasions, and my delegation has thus come to appreciate your great professional and human qualities. Moreover, you represent a country with which the Netherlands, since its appearance on the world scene as an independent State, has had so many quarrels that by now I can only think of our two nations as being almost inseparable.

27. I should also like to pay a tribute to your predecessor, Ambassador Troyanovsky, for the exemplary manner in which he carried out his duties as President of the Council during the at times all-too-lively and difficult month of May. Again, we had ample opportunity to admire his ability as a diplomat and to appreciate his fairness and style.

28. The complaint of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates concerning Iranian attacks on ships *en route* to and from the ports of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia is one of the most difficult and delicate issues with which the Council has had to deal in recent times, since it affects the vital interests not only of the littoral States in the region of the Persian Gulf, but also those of the whole world. I need not recall the importance of the Gulf region to international peace and security in general and to the stability of the world economy in particular.

29. The Netherlands Government is deeply concerned at the recent escalation of hostilities in the Gulf region. We appeal to both parties to exercise utmost restraint. In a recent common *démarche* at Baghdad and Tehran, the 10 States members of the European Community expressed their concern and underlined the risks of a very serious further deterioration of the situation. The latest hostilities have included attacks on ships *en route* to and from the ports of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. Since these events could endanger international peace and security in the region, it is of crucial importance that there be no further interference with international shipping in the Gulf. The safety of navigation in the Gulf is the *sine qua non* without which the essential flow of oil exports from the region will be seriously jeopardized.

30. The present complaint refers to recent attacks on ships *en route* to and from ports of States that are not party to the hostilities. However deplorable these events are, the Council should not forget that these are not the only hostilities involving neutral shipping in the Gulf. According to Lloyd's shipping intelligence, during the past three years more than 60 ships—two thirds of them commercial vessels from nations not involved in the war—have been attacked in the Gulf. It should be noted that three of these attacks fall within the category referred to in the complaint of Bahrain and the other Gulf countries.

31. As to the legal aspects of the attacks on shipping in the Gulf, let me observe that under international law belligerents may take measures to restrict shipping to and from ports of the other belligerents. Such measures do, of necessity, affect the rights of third States under whose flags such shipping is conducted. Imperfect as it may be in this field, international law nevertheless contains certain restrictions as to the implementation of such measures. Deliberate attacks and, at the same time, because of the means employed, indiscriminate attacks against merchant shipping in whatever part of the Gulf fall clearly outside the scope of the permissible use of armed force.

32. What should the Council do to remedy the present situation?

33. As a first priority, the legitimate concern of the littoral States that are not party to the hostilities should be satisfied. They are justifiably seeking assurances

from the Council that their territorial integrity shall be fully respected and that there shall be no recurrence of attacks on international commercial shipping *en route* to and from their ports. As has already become clear during this debate, their concerns are fully shared by other nations not involved in the war and whose vessels were attacked or are under threat of attack while navigating the high seas of the Gulf for commercial and peaceful purposes. For that matter, the Netherlands would consider any attack on an innocent vessel flying the Netherlands flag in whatever part of the Gulf as an unfriendly act and a serious violation of the right of free navigation and commerce in international waters.

34. Secondly, we cannot ignore the fact that the situation in the Gulf will remain highly unstable unless all hostilities in that region come to an end. Unfortunately, the Council's call of October last year [*resolution 540 (1983)*] immediately to cease all hostilities in the Gulf has not been heeded by the belligerents. Freedom of navigation is a right that should be respected equally by all concerned parties in the Gulf. Only then can we expect an effective cessation of all hostilities there to materialize. Such a cessation of all hostilities in the Gulf would at the same time open a window to a comprehensive cease-fire and a peaceful solution to the conflict.

35. The war between Iran and Iraq has now lasted for almost four years, and the dire consequences for both belligerents need not be spelt out here. This war now endangers international peace and security in the Gulf region. In order to reverse the present escalating spiral of events, what is required, above all, is to promote a peace process in which both parties become fully engaged. During our many previous consultations on this war, the Netherlands delegation has consistently tried to pursue this goal. We regret that previous decisions of the Council have failed to bring about conditions that could have induced both parties to seek a peaceful settlement of their conflict. It is, however, imperative that the international community continue its efforts to persuade both belligerents by persuasion and quiet diplomacy to end all violence and to seek a comprehensive, just and honourable settlement acceptable to both sides. In this connection, we continue to attach great importance of the mission of good offices of the Secretary-General and his Special Representative, Mr. Olof Palme, who are perhaps in a unique position to bring about a peaceful settlement to the dispute.

36. However, if the present spill-over of the war into the Gulf is not reversed and if the conflict escalates even further, then the Council might have to contemplate appropriate measures under the Charter as soon as circumstances require.

37. In conclusion, the Netherlands will vote in favour of the draft resolution introduced by the States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council. We welcome the fact that this draft resolution unambiguously calls upon all States to respect the territorial integrity of the littoral States that are not party to the hostilities. However, we would have preferred a clearer expression by the Council of the necessity to end all hostilities in the Gulf. In this connection, we recall the Council's call of October of last year to cease immediately all hostilities in the Gulf. Moreover, we attach particular importance to operative paragraph 1 of the present draft resolution, which calls upon all States to respect the right of free navigation in the Gulf. This right should not be interpreted selectively. We also welcome the call upon all States in operative paragraph 3 to exercise the utmost restraint and to refrain from escalating the conflict. We urge both belligerents to heed that call. Finally, we strongly hope that the Council's call not to interfere with shipping *en route* to and from States that are not party to the hostilities will be scrupulously respected.

38. Mr. de La BARRE de NANTEUIL (France) [*interpretation from French*]: Mr. President, we are doubly pleased to see you guiding the work of the Council: not only because of the excellent relations that exist between our two countries, but—on a more personal level, because of the high regard we all have for your courtesy, intelligence and imagination. These qualities will undoubtedly enable you to discharge your functions this month with excellent results.

39. I wish to thank our colleague, Mr. Troyanovsky, who so efficiently, and in so exemplary a manner, presided over the Council last month. I also pay a tribute to his well-known affability, good humour and charm —remarkable traits from which we have all benefited.

40. The States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council have complained to the Council following Iranian attacks on commercial ships *en route* to and from the ports of Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. We find that complaint well grounded. Indeed, it is a very serious matter, of interest not only to those States but to the international community as a whole. The attacks in question took place against non-belligerent States in an area outside the zone of conflict, and in some cases under the direct sovereignty of some of them. The Council must therefore condemn those attacks which in themselves call for a clear and unambiguous response on the part of the international community.

41. The States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council have themselves established a clear distinction between attacks against two of them in their own sovereign domain and acts of war resulting from the continuing tragic conflict between Iran and Iraq. At issue are two different matters: on the one hand, the conflict —the continuation and widening of which we are the first to deplore—and, on the other hand, the totally unwarranted violations of the most legitimate rights and interests of third States.

42. This conflict between Iran and Iraq has lasted for too long; it must be limited until it can ultimately be brought to a halt. At the same time, since it involves the freedom of navigation and commerce for all the Gulf States, France would remind the Council of the rel-

evance and topicality of resolution 540 (1983). It is essential to ensure that the text retains full authority, in spirit as well as in its conclusions. It behoves the United Nations, the Secretary-General, and all Member States to follow up on that resolution as provided for therein.

43. France, for its part, is prepared to spare no efforts to arrive at such a result, so that the conflict may finally come to an end, as the President of the French Republic stated on 29 May, "through an honourable settlement" between the two warring countries. The process of restoring peace, so earnestly desired by the international community, could begin, and an end be put to the suffering of those two great nations.

44. Mr. Shah NAWAZ (Pakistan): For the second time during Pakistan's membership of the Security Council it is my privilege, Sir, to pay tribute to the quality of your leadership, to which your experience, statesmanship and style impart a special distinction. Your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council ensures the success of its deliberations during this month. I also wish to express our deep appreciation for the outstanding manner in which the work of the Council was guided by Ambassador Troyanovsky during his presidency of the Council last month, when many difficult issues came before the Council for consideration.

45. The Council has been seized of the Iran-Iraq conflict and its attendant dangers for almost four years since the outbreak of this tragic fratricidal war. In the course of the consideration of this issue, the Council has produced five presidential statements and adopted four resolutions, none of which, as is evident from the recent developments, has had the desired impact on the course of the war.

46. There is not a Member State which can regard the Iran-Iraq conflict with detachment. The impact of the conflict is not limited to the two embattled nations; nor will its consequences be felt only in the region in which the war is being fought. In this sense, the Iran-Iraq conflict is truly global in its magnitude.

47. When the Iran-Iraq war was last debated in the Council [*2493rd meeting*], we had, in our statement, taken special note of this ever-present threat of the expansion of the war and the danger of its sparking off a great-Power confrontation in the region, if not igniting a world-wide conflict.

48. The continuation and possible expansion of this tragic war are matters of profound concern to Pakistan. Our concern flows from a multiplicity of considerations: historical and cultural, in view of our age-old links with the two belligerent States and the other Islamic countries, inhabiting a region distinguished by an unparalleled creativity in the fields of religion, philosophy and ideas, which has enlightened our civilization; humanitarian, because the sufferings and untold misery which this conflict has inflicted on innumerable innocent men, women and children in Iran and Iraq fill us with deep sorrow and compassion; practical and humane because of our acute awareness that wanton destruction of God-given resources, the bounties of the earth and the munificence of nature, which should have been devoted to the welfare of the peoples of the two countries and the banishment of poverty, hunger and disease, is a sin for which not only Iran and Iraq but countries beyond the region will have to pay; political and strategic because we realize that the vital interests which the super-Powers profess to have in the region may bring about an expansion of the war, with consequences too daunting to contemplate.

49. The dragon's teeth, sown in the recent past, are beginning to sprout one by one. The war on land has expanded into the waters of the Gulf, where attacks on international shipping have assumed alarming proportions. The excesses being committed in the course of an ever-escalating conflict will not bring advantage to any of the contending countries. On the other hand, they are bound to inflict lasting damage on both.

50. The most recent attacks on Saudi and Kuwaiti ships, which are the subject of the complaint brought to the Council by the States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council, represent a new dimension in the escalating conflict, with implications far beyond the region itself. Their immediate impact on the safety of international shipping in the Gulf bears the threat of disrupting the global economy and bringing about direct super-Power involvement in a conflict which has hitherto been confined to the region.

51. While it is necessary to continue pursuing the manifold initiatives, both within and outside the United Nations, to bring about a speedy and honourable settlement of the conflict, an even more immediate imperative is to prevent its further expansion by first ensuring the safety of neutral ships in the Gulf region. For this purpose, we wish to emphasize, in unequivocal terms, the absolute need for the strict observance of the following code of conduct by the belligerents: first, respect for freedom of navigation for all neutral ships in the Gulf; secondly, immediate cessation of all attacks on neutral ships; thirdly, respect for the inviolability of territorial waters of States which are not party to the hostilities.

52. We feel particular concern over attacks on the Saudi and Kuwaiti ships not only because the attacks are a clear violation of international law but also because they would bring about a qualitatively new situation by dragging into the conflict those States of the Gulf which had until now maintained a declared policy of neutrality.

53. We have closely studied the statement made at the beginning of the current debate by Sheikh al-Sabah, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Information of Kuwait [*2541st meeting*], and have

noted the concerns of the countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council at the expansion of the war in the Gulf region. He has highlighted the risk of foreign intervention and has emphasized the desire of the Gulf Co-operation Council to pursue peace through diplomacy and dialogue while refraining from resort to force. On behalf of the Gulf Co-operation Council States, he has asserted their eagerness to continue exercising self-restraint and to exert every possible effort with all the other parties to restore peace and stability in the region. This positive approach needs to be pursued, in the mutual interests of all peoples in the region, with patience, determination and a sense of commitment.

54. The draft resolution submitted by the States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council, in pursuance of their complaint concerning attacks on Saudi and Kuwaiti ships in international waters, calls upon the Security Council to pronounce itself on a specific aspect of the conflict between Iran and Iraq. The countries which have sponsored the draft resolution are not parties to the conflict and expect a reaffirmation from the Council of the right of free navigation and of the safe passage of ships to and from their ports in the Gulf region. This expectation, which is embodied in the draft resolution in document S/16594, is legitimate and calls for a positive response from the Council.

55. The draft resolution addresses itself to a specific aspect of the problem; but it is our hope that its adoption will contribute towards ensuring the safety of navigation in the region and towards preventing any further escalation of the Iran-Iraq conflict and its internationalization.

56. Our quest, however, is not limited to the containment of the conflict; we desire to see it come to a speedy end. In this spirit, we once again call on Iran and Iraq to leave the battlefield and come to the negotiating table to construct a peace which they and their neighbours so badly need.

57. Mr. TROYANOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) [*interpretation from Russian*]: Sir, you have become President of the Council in the course of the consideration of this item. It is, as it were, as if you had to leap on a train while it was already in motion. Nevertheless, all the indications leave us no doubt that with your great experience, your diplomatic abilities and the high qualifications of your assistants, the work of the Council under your leadership will be successful in the month of June. The Soviet delegation wishes to assure you that you can count on its co-operation. When, at the beginning of this meeting, you proposed the observance of English hours, I hope you did not intend that henceforth the Council would be working on Greenwich mean time—that is, with a five-hour time difference.

58. The Soviet delegation has listened attentively to the statements in the Council of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Information of Kuwait [*ibid.*], the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Qatar [*ibid.*], the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain [*2543rd meeting*], as well as the representatives of other countries, on the item which is now on the agenda. Of course, our attitude is one of understanding and of sympathy for the profound concern of the States of the Persian Gulf—as that expanse of water is customarily referred to in my country—concerning the tense situation prevailing in the region, which directly affects their legitimate national interests.

59. This serious concern over the state of affairs in the Persian Gulf region and over its future, is a note which was clearly struck in the statements of many Member States in the course of the recent meetings of the Council. In our view, these feelings are entirely justified and well founded. For more than three years now an armed conflict between Iran and Iraq, two neighbouring non-aligned countries, has continued to take a toll of thousands of human lives and tremendous material damage on both sides and has come to be a serious destabilizing factor in the situation in the region. Furthermore, this conflict threatens to assume even more dangerous and destructive proportions. Ever since this senseless and tragic conflict broke out, the Soviet Union has in no uncertain terms called for its early cessation and has asserted the need for a political settlement—by peaceful means, around the conference table—of the controversial issues separating Iran and Iraq.

60. Of course, the Soviet Union is by no means indifferent to what is happening in that region, which is in immediate proximity to its own borders. Motivated by the desire to create in the region a situation of tranquillity and normality, the Soviet Union as far back as 1980, when the destructive conflict was just beginning to gain momentum, put forward a proposal to all interested States to conclude agreements on mutual obligations likely to guarantee the sovereign rights and security of countries—primarily those of the region.

61. Such agreements, as we saw it at that time, could have included such measures as the obligation not to create military bases in the region or islands of the Persian Gulf or to deploy there any nuclear or other weapons of mass destruction. Provision could also have been made for an agreement prohibiting the threat or use of force against States of the region and intervention in their internal affairs. Of great positive significance would undoubtedly have been the obligation to respect the non-aligned status of those countries and not to enlist them in military groupings having the participation of nuclear-weapon States.

62. Finally, the Soviet proposal provided for working towards agreement to respect the right of States of the region to their natural resources and not to create any obstacles to normal commerce or the use of sea lanes linking the countries of the Persian gulf region with the rest of the world. There can be no doubt that all these measures could have served as a reliable guarantee of peace and security in the region.

63. As the Council will recall, the Soviet Union supported the previous decisions of the Council relating to a settlement of the Iran-Iraq conflict. The Soviet Union has also consistently favoured the Secretary-General's mission of good offices and other constructive international efforts designed to move the conflict in the direction of a political settlement. It can only be regretted that none of those efforts has so far proved successful.

64. Recent events have made it abundantly clear how easy it is for the sparks from the conflagration to be carried over to neighbouring States, thus heightening the danger of a spread of the conflict.

65. Indeed, the serious situation that has arisen makes it incumbent upon States to exercise the utmost circumspection and restraint so as to prevent any further spread of tension in the region. Nevertheless, there are forces at work which even now are not averse to playing with fire and are hatching—and even openly advertising—plans for armed intervention in the region. It would appear that the lessons of the recent inglorious end of the marine expeditionary force in Lebanon have not been properly digested by those who would settle complicated political problems by means of aircraft-carriers but, in so doing, fail to take into account the interests and aspirations of the States and peoples concerned.

66. What we are witnessing here is an outright attempt to mount a massive demonstration of military force to buttress claims to the Persian Gulf as one more area of "vital interest" of a State situated at the opposite end of the world. Events in recent days have amply proved the serious danger posed to the countries of the region by the United States attempt to exploit the existing situation in order to impose upon those countries its military co-operation, which in essence amounts to diktat and hegemony.

67. As the Soviet Union has repeatedly stated, any outside armed intervention in events occurring in the region of the Persian Gulf is inadmissible, no matter what the pretext. It should be absolutely clear to everyone that an expansion of this conflict as a result of intervention by imperialist States can only lead to an even more dangerous development of events.

68. This time, the scenarios for new acts of adventurism are being evolved on the pretext of ensuring the security of international shipping. It is noteworthy that the noisiest arguments about freedom of navigation have been made by precisely those who only recently, and for all the world to see, mined Nicaraguan ports and tried to argue, even here in the Council, as well as elsewhere, that such actions were somehow permissible under international law.

69. International law demands strict and unswerving observance of the principle of freedom of navigation. This is one of the most important principles of international and maritime law. It has evolved over many years based on actual practice by States and is universally acknowledged as an international convention and a binding treaty obligation which is laid down in the Geneva Convention on the High Seas of 1958[1] and the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea of 1982.[2] In particular, the 1982 Convention clearly provides for the obligations of States to observe freedom of navigation on the high seas, in the economic zone and in international straits. This is connected with the international legal régime governing the seas and oceans. Strict observance of that binding principle is in keeping with the interests of all States and peoples and serves both the objective of maintaining peace and security at sea and international peace as a whole.

70. In so far as the draft resolution submitted by six States of the Persian Gulf is concerned, the Soviet delegation intends to vote in favour. However, in so doing we express the hope that this decision on the part of the Council, upon which Member States of the Organization have placed fundamental responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, will be a reliable shield against the expansion and increase of armed conflict and will be a step towards a political settlement. In this regard, we should particularly like to point to operative paragraph 3 of the draft resolution, which calls upon all States to exercise the utmost restraint and to refrain from any act which may lead to a further escalation and widening of the conflict.

71. We also note with satisfaction the unambiguous assertions on the part of members of the Gulf Co-operation Council to the effect that they intend to strive to avoid any foreign intervention in the region and reject any patronage which is imposed upon them.

72. The PRESIDENT: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of the UNITED KINGDOM.

73. My Government, in common with the other members of the European Community, is deeply concerned at the escalation of the Iran-Iraq conflict. Despite the efforts which have been made by the Council the situation has worsened. The terrible destruction and loss of life continues unchecked. There is an increasing threat to the stability of the region and to the international economy. As the representative of the United States said:

> "The acceleration of attacks against shipping in the Gulf, particularly attacks against shipping going into or out of the ports of non-belligerent States, not only threatens those States but indirectly poses a potential threat to world price levels and ... inflation." [*2545th meeting, para. 23.*]

My Government opposes all actions contributing to a continuation of the conflict. It also opposes actions in contravention of international law which have escalated the conflict and widened it to the Gulf. The matter now before the Council is one aspect of this escalation.

74. The United Kingdom fully supports recourse by the Gulf Co-operation Council States to the Security Council. Britain is bound to the Gulf States by many ties of history and friendship. Our relations with them are close and cordial. We have listened sympathetically and with great concern to the statements made here by the Ministers of Kuwait [*2541st meeting*], Qatar [*ibid.*] and Bahrain [*2543rd meeting*] and by the representatives of Saudi Arabia [*2541st meeting*], the United Arab Emirates [*2543rd meeting*] and Oman [*ibid.*]. They have described the new and dangerous situation resulting from attacks by Iran upon innocent merchant shipping *en route* to and from Saudi Arabian and Kuwaiti ports. The attacks which have taken place in international waters and in the territorial sea of the States concerned are in clear breach of international law. They are both reprehensible and unjustified. We applaud the restraint the Gulf States have shown in this very difficult situation. The international community should show support for them.

75. It is understandable that, in their recourse to the Security Council, the Gulf States should seek as far as possible to isolate themselves from the Iran-Iraq conflict and to direct their complaint towards attacks which seek to involve them directly in that conflict. This is reflected in the draft resolution they have put forward. We agree that such attacks must be condemned, and we call for an immediate end to them. They affect not only the interests of the Gulf States but those of the whole international community as well. We all have an interest in freedom of navigation and a vital concern in the free flow of shipping to and from these States, including the flow of oil. It is right that the Gulf should be insulated from the conflict. It is also right that the principle of freedom of navigation should be reasserted. As the Deputy Prime Minister of Kuwait put it, there should be "a guarantee of the freedom of navigation in the Gulf region, in the interest of all countries of the region and the entire world" [*2541st meeting, para. 21*].

76. The Council has already taken a position in its resolution 540 (1983). That resolution, as several speakers—including the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain—have recalled, affirms the right to free navigation and commerce and calls upon the belligerents to cease all hostilities in the region of the Gulf. That affirmation remains valid. We do not interpret the present draft resolution as intending in any way to affect that.

77. The Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bahrain told the Council that the question submitted by the six States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council can be summed up in the fact that there is a threat to international freedom of navigation in the waterways of the Gulf. As a maritime nation of long standing the United Kingdom considers the principle of freedom of navigation as of paramount importance. As we said in a recent debate here on another matter:

> "we are committed to freedom of navigation, including innocent passage through the territorial sea and access to foreign ports for peaceful trade. We deplore any threats to navigation, whenever and wherever they occur." [*2529th meeting, para. 169.*]

For the United Kingdom, this is a fundamental principle. It must therefore apply equally to the Gulf.

78. The draft resolution concentrates for understandable reasons on one particular act of escalation, but clearly this does not mean that it condones other attacks on merchant shipping in the Gulf. We are therefore particularly pleased that the draft resolution in its revised form contains a clear and general reaffirmation of the right of free navigation. This right is laid down in international law, and we look to all States of the region to respect it. In our view neither side has the right to attack neutral shipping indiscriminately, whatever its destination. The breach of international law is flagrant if the shipping attacked is in transit to the ports of third countries and compounded if the attacks take place in the territorial waters of the third countries. Such attacks violate the sovereignty of the coastal States as well as the rights of the flag State.

79. The United Kingdom calls for an end to all attacks on the shipping of third States. There must be a return to stable conditions in the Gulf region. Equally, the United Kingdom keenly wishes to see an end to the conflict between Iran and Iraq, which has brought so much tragic loss of life to both nations and so much waste of their resources. It is the continuation of this conflict that has led to the current instability. Both sides must be prepared not only to refrain from escalating the conflict but also to bring it to a close. Any intransigence over a peaceful settlement must be put aside in the interests of the people of Iran and Iraq, of the Gulf region and of the international community in general. The United Kingdom is ready to give its full support to any efforts to mediate between the parties for a peaceful settlement, including those of the Secretary-General.

80. I now resume my function as PRESIDENT of the Council.

81. I call on the representative of Egypt, who wishes to make a statement on a point of procedure.

82. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt): I have asked to speak on a point of procedure, so I should like, if I may, to reserve my right to congratulate you, Sir, and the retiring President, Ambassador Troyanovsky, at a later stage.

[*The speaker continued in Arabic.*]

83. Rule 38 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure states that "proposals and draft resolutions may be put to a vote only at the request of a representative on the Security Council". The delegation of Egypt would therefore like formally to request that the draft resolution submitted by Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates be put to a vote.

84. Of Course, it is up to you, Mr. President, to schedule the vote at whatever time you deem appropriate; but we would express the hope that the voting take place as soon as possible, especially since the draft resolution before us is the result of a lengthy and strenuous process of negotiation during which the sponsors responded to the greatest extent possible to a number of important suggestions.

85. The PRESIDENT: In accordance with rule 38 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, the representative of Egypt has requested that the draft resolution in document S/16594 be put to the vote. Unless I hear any objection, I shall put the draft resolution to the vote now.

86. I shall now call upon those members of the Council who wish to make statements before the voting.

87. Mr. KRISHNAN (India): Naturally, I should like to begin by offering you, Sir, the warmest congratulations of my delegation on this, the first day of your presidency of the Council. The United Kingdom and India have traditional and historic ties of friendship, and we are fellow members of the Commonwealth fraternity. We have no doubt that your eminent personal qualities and intellectual acumen, as well as your well-known diplomatic skills and abilities, which, I might add, we had the pleasure of experiencing for several years at first hand while you were your country's High Commissioner to India, will stand us in good stead during the current month.

88. May I also take this opportunity to congratulate and pay a tribute to Ambassador Troyanovsky for the admirable and, let me add, always amiable and serene manner in which he handled the presidency of the Council during the very difficult month that has just ended.

89. Since the question of attacks on shipping in the waters of the Gulf was brought to the Council by the delegations of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, my delegation has followed the course of the discussions within and outside the Council with close attention. We share the widespread concern of the international community over this latest escalation of tension in the region.

90. In the face of the seriousness of the situation, Council action should be directed primarily to defusing tensions and preventing a further deterioration of the situation through a widening of the conflict between Iran and Iraq and the possible intervention of outside Powers, with all the implications for international peace and security. My delegation's approach to the draft resolution in document S/16594 will be determined by these considerations.

91. We uphold the principle of freedom of navigation as sacrosanct all over the world, including the region of the Gulf. It is therefore with deep regret and concern that we have witnessed the growing threats to commercial shipping in the region. The attacks against ships of countries of the Gulf littoral, namely Kuwait and Saudi Arabia, are undoubtedly to be deplored. Equally to be deplored are all attacks against commercial shipping of third countries in those waters. Ships of many countries, including my own, have been exposed to the growing danger and have been the objects of such attacks. Freedom of navigation and security of shipping in the Gulf should be safeguarded at all costs.

92. Even though the provisions of the draft resolution are not explicit enough to meet all our concerns, we are supporting them in the conviction that, in totality, they do amount to an unequivocal and categorical affirmation of the principle of freedom of navigation and commercial shipping and free and safe access and transit of ships of all countries, including of course those of the littoral. The language of operative paragraphs 4 and 5 of the draft resolution cannot and should not be interpreted as condoning or permitting other attacks against commercial shipping in the whole of the region. It is essential that the necessary restraint be observed and that the right of free navigation as provided by international law be scrupulously respected by the parties to the conflict. That is the intent and purpose of operative paragraph 1.

93. The issue the Council has been asked to address is, of course, the attacks on commercial shipping. At the same time, however, we cannot but note that what is happening now is related to the ongoing conflict between Iran and Iraq. It is but one more development in the series of actions and reactions in this long and unfortunate war. It is a war that should never have begun, has gone on far too long and should not continue any further. The longer it lasts, the greater the temptation to resort to unacceptable methods of warfare and impermissible actions, bringing about not only the danger of further escalation of the fighting and the widening of the conflict but also the grave potential of external involvement, which could only be to the detriment of the countries of the region, including the parties to the conflict.

94. Iran and Iraq are India's close and reliable friends of long standing and are our fellow members in the Non-Aligned Movement. The conflict between them has caused us profound anguish. It is not only destructive of them both; it also weakens the unity and solidarity of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries —unity and solidarity that are essential if the Movement is to play an effective role in our common struggle for peace and development. As current Chairman of the Movement, India has been striving to bring that war to an end. I should like to recall the words of the Prime Minister of India and current Chairperson of the Movement, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, who said in her statement at the Seventh Conference of Heads of State or Government of Non-Aligned Countries, held at New Delhi in March 1983:

> "Iran and Iraq are both members of the Non-Aligned Movement, which has amongst its principles

that all differences amongst member States should be resolved by peaceful means.

"We are convinced that an end to the Iran-Iraq conflict would contribute to strengthening the unity and solidarity of the Movement."

"It is the universal desire that the fighting must stop at once and the two sides come to an honourable, just and enduring peace through negotiations and peaceful means." [*See S/15675 and Corr.1 and 2, annex, p. 56.*]

95. It is a matter of deep regret to all of us that the conflict continues to rage on and has indeed escalated in recent weeks. The draft resolution before the Council deals with one aspect of this escalation. As we all know, this draft resolution has been the subject of intensive negotiation over the last few days. Several non-aligned members of the Council made certain suggestions regarding the original draft which were, by and large, welcomed. Some of these suggestions have been incorporated in the revised draft that is before us. Some others have not been found acceptable by the sponsors. We of course understand the concerns of those who made the suggestions as well as the concerns of those who did not find it possible to accept some of them. On the whole, we would have liked to see the draft resolution acquire greater balance and deal also with other aspects, with a view to making it more constructive and generally acceptable and more likely to lead to security of international shipping and freedom of navigation in the Gulf as well as an end to the conflict, which we all so ardently desire. Nevertheless, even as it stands, the draft resolution would, we hope, assist in de-escalating the situation and keeping the Gulf free and safe for commercial shipping. For those reasons my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution.

96. Mr. GAUCI (Malta): Mr. President, you know the feelings of friendship and the high esteem I have for you and for your country, so I shall only say that the generous words you were good enough to address to me last November are even more accurately applicable to you than they were to me. Those words were in fact justified by the wisdom of your opening statement this morning concerning the work of the Council as a whole and your predecessor's role in the exercise of the functions of the presidency of the Council last month. It was a particularly difficult one and Ambassador Troyanovsky rose superbly to the occasion. I know that he would have wished to do even more and to tackle other subjects, but that was clearly not possible. I should like to thank him for having performed his task so well last month.

97. If there is one small issue, Sir, on which I would disagree with you, it is the question of hours. If we were to keep Maltese hours, I assure you we would do even better and serve as a practical example of Anglo-Maltese co-operation and Council efficiency—based, however, on New York time. It might even include the bonus of a short afternoon siesta for good behaviour.

98. As on previous occasions, my delegation intervenes with great regret to express once more deep concern at the extremely grave situation in the Gulf region still confronting the Council. Almost daily for the past four years, the Maltese Government has repeatedly stressed the inherent dangers and unfortunate repercussions of the conflict between Iran and Iraq. Regrettably, hostilities continue unabated, with appalling waste of human and material resources on both sides, which in turn engender waves of sympathy not only from the relatives of the victims but also from ordinary people throughout the world.

99. Instead of a cessation or at least an abatement of hostilities, a new and dangerous element has now been introduced through the latest phase of air attacks on neutral civilian shipping. This has tended to aggravate tensions not only in the Gulf region itself but also beyond. The fact that commercial ships of non-belligerent third parties have been the target of attacks is the latest grim reminder of the dangerous situation prevailing in the Gulf region and calls for our immediate attention to the complaint lodged by the countries concerned.

100. On this occasion, Malta cannot remain quietly concerned, since the latest actions infringe important principles of international law, in particular the fundamental principle of freedom of commercial navigation, with inevitable economic repercussions that will affect the whole world.

101. The Government of Malta particularly understands the anxiety of the countries of the Gulf Co-operation Council not to get involved in the hostilities of their neighbours, and we respect that position. We have listened very carefully to their statements and their declared intentions before the Council. We welcome the presence among us of the Ministers of Kuwait, Bahrain and Qatar. The issue they have raised can be kept separate from the main collective effort required from all peace-loving countries to persuade the two belligerents to accept an early cessation of hostilities under the auspices of the Security Council with simultaneous mediation to secure a just and honourable peace.

102. This week of intensive negotiations has now produced a text calling for action by the Council today. In view of the limited objective which the proponents of the draft resolution set themselves, we can readily understand that some other important elements necessary for an overall balance in the draft resolution had to be omitted.

103. In this connection, we feel obliged to make it clear that the restrictive formulations appearing in operative paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 of the draft resolution can in no way be interpreted to derogate in any way from the universally accepted norms of international behaviour or the general principles of international law. We do so especially at this time when some tendency

exists to attempt to qualify the application of international law in particular situations which have already been discussed in the Council.

104. We wish to stress, therefore, that our interpretation of the paragraphs in question is that they apply equally to all commercial shipping in all regions of the world, irrespective of origin or final destination of the commercial shipping and the area of navigation, in accordance with international law.

105. We also stress that the obligation of all States to exercise maximum restraint and to refrain from any act that might further escalate or widen the conflict is paramount.

106. We remain fully committed to the efforts of all parties in the search for an overall peaceful solution, with the primary responsibility falling on the States of the region. To them, and to the parties concerned, we repeat our pledge of maximum effort and co-operation within our modest means. We hope the time will soon come—the sooner the better—for the cessation of hostilities and an honourable settlement.

107. In the light of this explanation, Malta will vote in favour of the draft resolution now before us.

108. Mr. BASSOLE (Upper Volta) [*interpretation from French*]: As you take up the presidency of the Council, Sir, I am happy to convey to you on behalf of the delegation of the Upper Volta, our best wishes for success in your work. We are sure that your profound knowledge of major world problems and your distinguished qualities as a diplomat will help you in this.

109. I take this opportunity to pay a tribute to the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Comrade Oleg Troyanovsky, for the effectiveness and competence with which he guided the Council's proceedings last month.

110. The lengthy debates which the Council has been holding on the letter of complaint addressed to its President by the representatives of Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have made abundantly clear not only the gravity but also the complexity of the situation prevailing in the Gulf.

111. It might appear utopian to attempt to examine this situation in isolation from the more general context of a war of mutual destruction between two members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries. Nevertheless, that is the course chosen by my country, since the new dimensions which the conflict between Iran and Iraq is now assuming cause us profound concern, for more than one reason. Not only is this war wreaking economic and human havoc on both peoples but its consequences are threatening to spread beyond its boundaries: political consequences in terms of outside interference, which we glimpse on the horizon, and economic consequences in terms of the burden it may impose on a number of countries that are already buckling under the weight of the world economic crisis.

112. The vote that the Upper Volta will shortly cast should be understood solely as part of its determination to condemn energetically any act, whatever its source, that is not in accordance with the obligation of all Member States to abide by the principles of the Organization. That vote cannot and should not be interpreted as in any way indicating that we take a stand in the conflict that is destroying two members of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, because the position it reflects is well known, having been set forth clearly on various occasions.

113. The draft resolution contained in document S/16594 would certainly have been more balanced had certain proposals on the part of the non-aligned countries been taken into account. As a well-known author quite rightly said, perfect reason eschews extremism and requires sobriety with wisdom. Every great thought can be a benefit to each of us, not only to those who are crossing swords, but also, without doubt, even more so to those who are helping them to persist in these extreme measures.

114. The PRESIDENT: I shall now put the draft resolution contained in document S/16594 to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour: China, Egypt, France, India, Malta, Netherlands, Pakistan, Peru, Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic, Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Upper Volta.

Against: None.

Abstaining: Nicaragua, Zimbabwe.

The draft resolution was adopted by 13 votes to none, with 2 abstentions [resolution 552 (1984)].

115. The PRESIDENT: I shall now call upon those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

116. Mr. MASHINGAIDZE (Zimbabwe): Allow me first of all, Sir, to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of June. Your well-known diplomatic skills and many other excellent qualities of leadership give us justifiable confidence that the Council will be in safe hands during the period of your presidency. I should also like on behalf of my delegation to pay a tribute to your predecessor, Comrade Oleg Troyanovsky, the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, for the most efficient manner in which he guided the deliberations of the Council last month.

117. We have asked to speak to offer a brief explanation of our vote. The entire world community is deeply disturbed by the escalating situation in the Gulf region today. It is understandable, therefore, that the six countries members of the Gulf Co-operation Council should be so alarmed as to appeal to the Security Council for help. Indeed, our delegation had hoped that the Council would be able to seize the opportunity not only to address the very justified complaint of the six States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council but also to look at the complaint within its wider, and I dare say, proper perspective, that is, to see and analyse current events in the Gulf region as representing yet another very ugly dimension of the ongoing war between Iran and Iraq that threatens to entangle the entire Gulf region, something most of us have always feared.

118. The fears of the international community are justified, since the entanglement of other Gulf region countries not only represents a first step towards a dangerous widening of the Iran-Iraq conflict but also threatens to destabilize the whole region. Since the Gulf region is so vital to the stability of the economic well-being of most of the world, we are concerned that, unless this ongoing war between Iran and Iraq is brought to an end, its rapid spread in the Gulf region may soon threaten world stability and peace.

119. In our opinion, the Council should have appealed to both Iran and Iraq to end this senseless war, which has already cost, and continues to cost, both countries, which are Members of the Organization, so dearly and so heavily in human blood and in financial and economic terms. Equally the Council should have called upon both parties to the conflict strictly to respect the right of free navigation and commerce in international waters and the sea lanes in the Gulf region, including sea lanes for shipping *en route* to and from States not parties to the conflict—and the emphasis should be on "equally".

120. Therefore, we had hoped that the resolution just adopted would have been an opportunity for the Council to speak with one voice to both countries. Unfortunately, however, this was not so. As is now well known, our delegation is one of those that decided to abstain from giving the resolution our support. We took this view because we felt that the resolution failed to take an even-handed approach to the wider issue before the Council: the war between Iran and Iraq.

121. It will be recalled—indeed, many delegations here have already said so—that our delegation, and many others, endeavoured right up to the very last moment to steer the Council away from the temptation to adopt a decision likely to create more difficulties and impediments in the world community's long-term and overriding objective: the search for a just and peaceful end to the tragic war between Iran and Iraq. These endeavours, however, were unsuccessful, and so the Council has adopted this resolution.

122. We sincerely hope that this resolution will contribute to a solution to the tragic predicament facing the peoples of the region. However, since we continue to be convinced that the main issue, the main problem in the region is the Iran-Iraq conflict, we also sincerely hope that in an honest effort to address the immediate issue, the immediate problem, the Council has not rendered the search for a peaceful solution to the real and wider issue much more difficult. That is our very sincere hope. We do respect the decision of those that voted in favour of the resolution.

123. Mr. MI Guojun (China) [*interpretation from Chinese*]: Consistent with the principle that the right to freedom of navigation on the high seas and international sea lanes should be guaranteed, and that ships of non-belligerent parties must not come under attack, the Chinese delegation voted in favour of the resolution just adopted by the Council.

124. China takes a strictly neutral position with regard to the war between Iran and Iraq. We sincerely hope that a cease-fire can be effected as soon as possible between the two sides and that their disputes will be settled through peaceful negotiations. Any action the Council takes must be conducive to bringing about the participation of the two sides in a process of peaceful negotiations.

125. Mr. CHAMORRO MORA (Nicaragua) [*interpretation from Spanish*]: First of all, Sir, I wish to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. You come from a country which has a long and rich diplomatic experience, and in order to do you justice, I must add that your qualities honour that tradition. We are fully confident that in your hands the work of the Council will be successful.

126. I also wish equally to congratulate Ambassador Troyanovsky of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, who, with no less distinguished qualities and diplomatic skills and experience, guided our work last month. His equanimity and skills place the name of his great nation at a very high level indeed.

127. A number of brother countries have come to the Council to express their deep concern over the events taking place in the Gulf region and to request of this highest organ appropriate measures to reserve such a dangerous situation and guarantee safety and the full exercise of the right of free navigation and commerce in the waters of that region. The international community, and Nicaragua in particular, share these wishes and concerns. For that very reason, we must rid that region of the spectre of foreign intervention, abiding by the principles and international norms contained in the Charter and avoiding any pretext which might be an invitation to intervention.

128. Nicaragua, together with the brother countries that have expressed their consternation, shares these fears and also shares the faith they have in the princi-

ples of the Charter and in the Security Council as the highest organ entrusted with ensuring international peace and security. In that spirit, in the past few days, we worked hard with an important group of countries members of the Council—basically non-aligned countries—with a view to finding the most appropriate way in which to have the necessary calm and quiet restored to the Gulf region. We also kept in close touch with the co-sponsors of the draft resolution, and we must recognize that they did take into account several of our concerns.

129. It escapes no one that the problem facing us is of a delicate and complex nature. It has arisen as the result of a war between two brother countries that has gone on for almost four years and that is being exacerbated with grave consequences for their economies and their peoples. Our position on this tragic war is well known; it fully coincides with the principles that inspire the efforts undertaken by the Non-Aligned Movement to put an end to this conflict through a peaceful, just and honourable settlement for both countries.

130. The international community and all non-aligned countries are clamouring for an end to this painful and senseless war. The continuation of the war does not benefit the brother peoples of Iran and Iraq or the countries of the Gulf. That is why it is imperative for us to work for peace. That war not only destroys both peoples but also divides the Arab nation, favouring the interests of its true enemies and impeding the full realization of its fundamental objectives.

131. The Council has already dealt with this situation on several occasions, but without success. It has not always been possible for this organ to maintain a position according to which, instead of deepening wounds and exacerbating the conflict, it would seek to heal the wounds on both sides and to narrow the gap between points of disagreement with a view to arriving at the final settlement everyone wishes.

132. This time we have been faced with the task of finding a formula to de-escalate the conflict to a minimum—a formula which, in addition to enhancing the principles of international law, in particular those of free navigation and commerce and respect for the territorial integrity of States, would restore normalcy to the Gulf region and peace to the countries that have come to the Council in search of a solution.

133. We fully appreciate the concerns of some of the co-sponsors of the draft resolution over the present escalation of hostilities in their own waters, and we appeal to the belligerent parties to respond to those concerns and also without restriction to respect free navigation and commerce in the Gulf waters, indeed in the waters of all the littoral States.

134. A few weeks ago my country, Nicaragua, also brought before this lofty body the situation that had arisen in our main ports as a result of their being mined by the United States Central Intelligence Agency. Several cargo ships of various nationalities—among them some of the same nationalities as those that have been damaged in the Gulf—were also damaged in our waters. We are therefore aware of the value and the importance of the principle of free navigation and commerce; we are therefore aware of the value and importance of free transit and safety in the seas; thus, our concern for the Council at this time fully to reiterate the validity of this principle for all countries and in all situations. We deeply regret that this kind of reaffirmation we had wished was not duly formulated in the resolution that was just adopted.

135. My delegation wishes clearly to establish that the Government of Nicaragua reiterates its total commitment to the full applicability of the principle of free navigation and commerce. That we refrained today from supporting the resolution as a whole and abstained in the voting should not be interpreted otherwise. Something similar applies to the formulation of the principle of respect for the territorial integrity of all States.

136. It was with extreme concern and indignation that we heard a few days ago public statements that did not discount the possibility of foreign intervention in the Gulf region. The well-grounded fear expressed by several speakers in the course of the debate can only be brought to an end through a clear reiteration of the universal principle of respect for the territorial integrity of all States and, in particular, of all States in the Gulf region. In our view, the formulation of the principle contained in the resolution just adopted leaves the door open for foreign Powers to intervene directly in the countries party to the conflict. My country can under no circumstances accept such action, which is precisely what is being attempted in Central America, specifically against Nicaragua.

137. We consider the appeal for respect for the territorial integrity of non-belligerent States to be of great importance, but we firmly believe that the applicability of that principle must extend to other countries even when they are at war, as is the case with Iran and Iraq. Under no circumstances should we give any foreign Power the pretext for a possible future intervention in Iran or Iraq. We do not think the present formulation of that principle promotes a peaceful settlement of the fratricidal war; what is worse, it gives rise to great fear on our part as to the future of that conflict.

138. Nicaragua earnestly wished to be able to vote in favour of the draft resolution submitted by a group of countries with which we share the ideals and concerns of the Arab world, of which they are a part. We would have wished the text to contribute constructively to solving the serious problem of the Iran-Iraq war. However, for the reasons expressed here, and out of a desire to maintain a position consistent with positions that we have adopted in connection with General Assembly and Security Council resolutions on the Iran-Iraq war, we had to abstain in the vote, very much to our regret.

139. We believe that in so doing we have been consistent with the principles of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries and with the positions that our Movement has supported; indeed, we feel we have been consistent with our policy of neutrality and of full co-operation in the search for real solutions to the senseless war between Iran and Iraq.

140. Mr. KHALIL (Egypt) [*interpretation from Arabic*]: At the outset of this brief statement, in commenting on Egypt's vote in favour of the resolution, I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your re-assumption of the presidency of the Council. I need not reaffirm our full confidence in your great diplomatic skill or our certainty that the aforementioned skill will contribute to success in the Council's deliberations this month, which coincides with the beginning of the holy month of Ramadan. Thus, all of us, and especially Muslims, hope that the Council will witness a period of calm, even for a while.

141. While we congratulate you, Sir, I am confident that you share my sentiments when I express our appreciation to your predecessor, Ambassador Troyanovsky, who conducted the work of the Council with his habitual competence, thus facilitating our work during a period of intense effort, the burden of which fell largely upon him until the last moments of May.

142. The resolution just adopted by the Council was the result of strenuous efforts and intense, continuous contact between the members of the Council and the co-sponsors of the draft and others who, in a responsive and co-operative spirit, proved their sincere desire to work for the restoration of stability, security and peace in the Gulf region. Those States responded positively to the great majority of the proposals submitted to them.

143. Egypt voted in favour of the resolution, proceeding from its fervent hope that its adoption would contribute positively to putting an end to the escalation of the conflict and restoring confidence in the possibility of progress towards a negotiated comprehensive, just and lasting settlement of the Iran-Iraq conflict. In that connection, we envisaged continuous efforts, both within and without the United Nations, to create conditions conducive to a favourable response to the appeals of the international community and acceptance of a cease-fire in an impartial context.

144. This is the practical approach to solving the problem. The basis for seeking an alternative to war exists, and we must attempt to give it substance.

145. The PRESIDENT: The Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Information of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, has asked to speak. I call upon him.

146. Mr. Al-SABAH (Kuwait) [*interpretation from Arabic*]: Allow me, Sir, on the first day of your presidency of the Council for this month, to congratulate you on behalf of all the States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council on your assumption of this high office. We trust that your competence will make it possible for you to conduct the affairs of the Council in such a way as to lead to a successful conclusion in the interest of international peace and security.

147. I also take this occasion to express our appreciation and gratitude to your predecessor, our friend Mr. Troyanovsky, the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, for his sincere efforts and the great wisdom with which he guided the deliberations of the Council during the past month. Indeed, his patient and prudent efforts have played a great role in our accomplishments.

148. In my statement during the opening of discussions of the issue under consideration, I said that:

> "We come here not out of weakness or fear, but rather out of faith in the need to settle international disputes in accordance with the principles embodied in the Charter—by methods that will obviate the resort to force, with all its devastating effects on national construction, which we developing nations need so badly in order to fulfil the aspirations of our peoples for a better future. Our appearance here is in itself an assertion of our desire to keep conflicts away from our region and to provide ways and means of preventing the devastating war that will surely strike the region if it is not seriously and responsibly prevented by the world at large." [*2541st meeting, para. 26.*]

149. Today, by adopting the draft resolution we submitted, the Council has again reaffirmed the role assigned to it in the Charter, and by their co-operation its members have once again proved their loyalty and devotion to the principles all mankind has accepted as its constitution. The States that adopted the resolution have sent the message to the world that the language of peace must prevail and that world stability and prosperity can be achieved only by determined collective effort.

150. The State of Kuwait once again affirms that, together with its sister States in the Gulf Co-operation Council, all peace-loving nations and regional and international organizations, it will do its utmost to bring a quick and just end to this war and restore peace to this vital region of the world.

151. Having adopted this resolution, the Council is now called upon to do everything possible to ensure its implementation. Thus, we thank the Secretary-General, express appreciation of his efforts in this respect and anticipate that he will follow up the implementation of this resolution. We reaffirm our constructive co-operation with him in his efforts to carry out his mission in accordance with the provisions of the resolution.

152. On behalf of all the States members of the Gulf Co-operation Council, I wish to thank our friends the

members of the Security Council for their sincere efforts and for the wisdom and concern they have demonstrated during the consideration of this complaint. Let us work together now in all sincerity to translate this resolution into the reality representing the will of the Security Council, which is the organ entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security.

153. I must not fail to thank also the States that participated with us in the general discussion of this vital issue. The participation of those nations has demonstrated world concern regarding the need for peace and stability in our region, with its impact on international peace and security.

154. The PRESIDENT: I shall now call on the representative of the United States of America who has asked to speak in exercise of his right of reply.

155. Mr. SORZANO (United States of America): I am sure, Sir, that we shall have plenty of opportunities to congratulate you on the assumption of the presidency of the Council and also to compliment Ambassador Troyanovsky on the excellent manner in which he fulfilled his responsibilities last month.

156. We regret that the Soviet Union has apparently returned to the attitudes of the cold war to such an extent that it does not merely walk out of disarmament talks but now foists its tired rhetoric upon the Security Council, irrespective of the serious issues before it. We had hoped it would be otherwise, in the mistaken expectation that our own restraint would encourage the Soviet delegation not to distract the Council from the issues before it.

157. Now, however, the Soviet representative has alluded to the deaths of our valiant Marines who were in Lebanon on a mission of peace to help that beleaguered nation which has suffered for so long emerge from years of violent strife. The Soviet representative alleges that the United States has not learned the lesson that violence and military force do not solve problems. If I may say so, this is an astonishing claim coming from the representative of a country that is invading a small, neighbouring, previously non-aligned State and at this very moment is conducting a vicious military campaign which includes high-altitude, indiscriminate carpet bombing that is inflicting enormous casualties upon the innocent and defenceless Afghan civilian population. Apparently the Soviet representative is not aware of these events, or perhaps he prefers to ignore them. May I suggest that he address his counselling about the tragic effects of violence and military force to his own authorities?

158. The PRESIDENT: I call on the representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, who wishes to exercise his right of reply.

159. Mr. TROYANOVSKY (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics): I must say that I sympathize with the representative of the United States in his predicament. The points which we made in our statement are hard to deny. It is hard to deny that there has been the mining of Nicaraguan ports. It is hard to deny that such action is a violation of international law and freedom of navigation. It is hard to deny that the region of the Gulf has been proclaimed a region of United States vital interests. It is hard to deny that there are plans afoot for a possible intervention in that region.

160. Not being able to deal with these issues, the representative of the United States has indulged in rhetoric on extraneous issues, and I believe it would have been better if he could have made some commitment about the United States not intervening and not getting involved in the region with which we are dealing.

161. The PRESIDENT: The Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 1.10 p.m.

NOTES

[1] See United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 450, No. 6465.

[2] *Official Records of the Third United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea*, vol. XVII, document A/CONF.62/122.

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